

ELECTRONIC REVIEW (ER)

INTRODUCTION

The web-based Electronic Review (ER) system expedites scientific review of grant applications and contract proposals. Its objectives are to:

- improve the overall quality of reviews;
- permit more efficient and effective use of reviewers' time at meetings; and
- expedite the approval/funding process via easier, more efficient administration of reviews (e.g., summary statement preparation by NIH staff).

During the “**submit**” phase, reviewers submit their critiques via a secure web site on the Internet, accessible only to committee members and responsible NIH staff (usually only the Scientific Review Administrator (SRA) and assistant). During the “**read**” phase, after the deadline for submission has passed, reviewers may read each other's critiques prior to the review meeting. Following the review meeting, the site *may* be re-opened so that reviewers may revise their critiques if their viewpoints were changed as a result of discussions during the meeting; implementation of this **edit phase** is at the SRA's discretion.

SUBMISSION OF CRITIQUES

The **starting point** is the ER homepage <http://grants.niaid.nih.gov/review>. Type the full address; the “/review” is required. Any type of **computer** (e.g., IBM-type PC, Apple) and any **word-processing software** may be used to prepare critiques prior to submission. Once you

have prepared your critiques, you will post them to the website via a simple copy-and-paste operation. A current version of any Internet **browser** software (e.g., Microsoft Internet Explorer (MSIE), Netscape) may be used, but *MSIE is highly recommended* for optimal system performance.

The SRA will provide an individual **login name and password** to each reviewer for use in posting and viewing critiques. These must be typed carefully. For example, the system will interpret a login name that contains a blank space as a different (*i.e.*, incorrect) login.

It is of the utmost importance that critiques are posted to the system by the **submission deadline**.

“**Cookies**” must be “enabled” on the reviewer's computer workstation to permit access to the ER system and to ensure confidentiality.

If a message pops up stating that the site's “**security certificate** has expired”, click “yes” or “ok” to proceed (*i.e.*, regardless). There is no real problem; the site is secure – it is only an administrative certification renewal that may be in progress.

If you receive a “page is expired” message while navigating between pages, follow the guidance on your screen; your browser may require that you “refresh” or “reload” the screen.

READING OTHER REVIEWERS' CRITIQUES

After the critique posting deadline has passed, the reviewer will be able to read critiques submitted by other reviewers. However, if the reviewer has not yet submitted his/her own critique for an application, the SRA may impose a **reading block** (*i.e.*, block the reviewer from reading other critiques for that application).

A reviewer who has a **conflict of interest (COI)** with an application will not be able to read critiques for that application/proposal *at any time*.

“Telephone reviewers” may be limited to reading critiques for only those applications to which they are assigned.

“Mail reviewers” (also called “write-in reviewers” or “outside opinions”) will not be able to read critiques at all.

During the read phase, the reviewer will not be able to submit or edit his/her own critiques.

ASSISTANCE

If you have any questions or problems related to this system, contact:

Electronic Review Help Desk 301-435-8451 ERinbox@niaid.nih.gov

The help desk is manned during the day, Monday through Friday. Voice mail is available at all times for telephone messages.